

Family Engagement Newsletter



P.S. duPont Middle School

Spring Edition

Volume 2, Issue 3

April, 2014

Letter From the Principal

Greetings P.S. Parent(s) and Guardian(s)!

I cannot believe that we are winding down to the end of the school year. I feel like just yesterday we were having open house and all of the students and parents were meeting their teachers. It's been a great year! Together we have learned much and shared experiences that will long remain with us in the years to come. The strength of our community and wholehearted passion to make our school a wonderful place of learning for our children primarily but for all of us makes P.S. truly a special place.

I would like to thank all of our volunteers for volunteering this school year. Without your help, we would not have had a PBS store, we would not have had a PTA, and we would not have had all of our wonderful events.

In addition, I would like to wish our eight grade students the best of luck in high school. I know they will represent P.S. duPont Middle School very well. We will miss all of their energy, spirit, and leadership.

We also wanted to remind you that P.S. now has a Facebook and Twitter page. **Twitter:** @PS_DuPont and **Facebook:** P.S. Dupont Middle School

As we wind down to the end of the school year, please encourage your students to stay focused. I know everyone is excited about the summer, however, we still have a couple of more weeks left and we need our students to continue to pay attention in school and finish the school year out with a bang!

Sincerely,

Lewis Cheatwood

P.S. duPont Middle School Principal

It is the directive of the Board of Education that the Brandywine School District shall not discriminate in its employment practices or its educational programs and activities of students on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, domicile, marital status, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any legally protected characteristic. All policies, regulations and practices of the District shall be guided by this directive.

Education Corner

This section provides educational information for P.S. Families.



Summer Activities for Pre-Teens

Below are a list of fun things for your teens to do this summer. Print it out and give it to your teen the first they tell you they are bored or be proactive and give it to them before they complain about nothing to do. Many of these activities can be done either with friends or individually

1. Make a music video
2. Grow a plant and take care of it throughout the summer.
3. Invent a new type of pizza
4. Ride a bike
5. Play frisbee golf
6. Catch lightning bugs
7. Go Swimming
8. Have a water balloon fight
9. Make summer tote bags out of a recycled shirts
10. Picnic at a local park
11. Volunteer at a community center
12. Go Fishing
13. Create photo journal
14. Play a sport
15. Hike a rail trail
16. Visit a local library and sign up for their summer reading program
17. Swap a favorite book with a friend and read it
18. Make a friendship bracelet and send it to a friend
19. Write a poem
20. Help plan a family vacation
21. Find out what events are going on in your community.

Positive Parenting for Your Teen

Parenting preteens, or tweens, can be a challenge. Discipline, school, homework, time with family -- everything is renegotiated. Hormones kick in as puberty approaches, and the pressures of the peer group magnify. Many moms and dads react to their tween's moodiness, focus outside the family, increasing independence and maturing physical body by distancing somewhat from their child. But tweens need to feel they have a secure nest as they launch themselves into the exciting but scary world. Kids who feel disconnected from their parents lose their anchor and look for it in their peer group.



The only way to make it through the tween years with a firm foundation for the years to come is to fiercely maintain a strong bond with your child, even while you encourage age-appropriate freedom. In fact, much like the toddler years, parents are the ones who determine whether the tween years are turbulent or terrific. How?

1. Stay connected by having dinner together every night, or as often as possible. Kids who have dinner with their parents do better in school, are less likely to use drugs or alcohol, are less likely to have sex while in high school, and are less likely to experience depression or anxiety.

Check in with your tween every single day by spending some private time together; many parents find that fifteen minutes at bedtime is grounding and most intimate. But car rides run a close second, probably because kids feel less threatened when you aren't looking right at them. Establish a rule of no ipods or smart phones in the car so you can use that time to connect with your child. (And of course that rule applies to you also!)

Schedule regular longer alone-time with each parent, such as monthly brunch with Dad or weekly walks with Mom. Don't expect your son or daughter to invite closeness or volunteer vulnerable emotions at each interaction, or when you expect it. But if you set up enough regular opportunities to be together, it will happen.

2. To reduce rebelliousness, recognize and work with your tween's need for independence. Be aware that as we feel less powerful as parents we often compensate by becoming overprotective. Instead of breathing down his neck, agree on and enforce standards. Set reasonable limits (no phone calls during dinner and after 9pm, no online chatting or TV until homework is finished) and be sure to offer empathy when they hate your limits. It's their job to test limits, and yours to set limits based on your values.

3. Re-think your previous ideas about discipline. Power-based punishment strategies stop working as soon as your child gets big enough to say "You can't make me." Even consequences will only work a short time longer, because many teens simply refuse them. You never win a power struggle with your child. The only leverage we really have with our tweens and teens is their love for us, which becomes a more potent motivator over time. That means the best way to get your tween to follow your rules is to maintain a strong bond with him.

4. Don't underestimate hormones. Your child's body is changing, creating mood swings, distractibility,

Positive Parenting for Your Teen Cont.

competitiveness, and preoccupation with the opposite sex. What's more, their brains are undergoing an extensive re-wiring, which can make them emotionally volatile. Tweens can even find themselves in a full-blown tantrum without understanding how it happened. Kindly tell your tantruming preteen that you see how upset they are and you want to give them time to pull themselves together before you discuss it. Ask them if they want you to stay, or to leave the room to let everyone calm down. Your preteen doesn't understand his or her moods any more than you do right now. Later, give them a big hug, and really listen to what they have to say. Even if you can't agree with their position, acknowledge your child's perspective, and work to find a win/win solution.

5. Don't take it personally! When your tween yells at you to drop dead, don't over-react. When they hurt your feelings and you're tempted to withdraw, take a deep breath and stand your ground calmly. That doesn't mean you don't kindly demand civility, and it doesn't mean you can't use strategic withdrawals as a chance to regroup, but that you continue to reinforce your love for and connection to your child. Your best way to get your tween to act respectfully towards you is to extend respect to her, and to calmly insist on it in return.

6. The tween years are the perfect time to teach values, which is best done not by lecturing, but by asking questions. To get your child talking, become a brilliant listener, empathizer, and question asker. Tweens are usually curious about your own early years, those can be great opportunities to reassure them that even their parents were insecure, as all tweens are. It's also an opportunity to teach; don't be afraid to share real life examples of teens who died from drinking and driving, or became addicted to drugs. It's best, though, if stories about your own life set a positive, rather than negative example, such as having been insecure but struggled and overcome obstacles -- and now you're lucky enough to be your child's parent!



7. Be aware that the more popular culture your child is exposed to, the more risk she runs of drug and alcohol use, depression and teen pregnancy. Tweens want to feel grown up, so naturally they ape adult popular culture. Yes, they have to fit in with their friends, but they count on their parents to keep them safe and let them know what's age appropriate. They aren't ready for the attention they get when they wear revealing fashions or sing that inappropriate song at the recital. They need you to enforce strict rules regarding internet use and what movies are appropriate. Tweens want and need your guidance, even if they can't show it.

8. Tweens are actively shaping their identity. Support their experimenting and exploring, even when they're into a new fad every few weeks. Don't comment on their fashions as long as their body coverage is appropriate, and keep an open mind about their music. Especially support the deep passions into which they really pour themselves; those are protective during the tween and teen years.

9. Stay aware of your tween's schoolwork, offering help as necessary in developing time management skills, insuring that homework gets done and big projects are worked on over time. Be aware that how hard your tween works at school will depend on whether his peers do, and try to have him attend a school where the kids consider good grades cool. Maintaining high expectations and insuring that homework doesn't get neglected in favor of evening screen and social time is critical.

Positive Parenting for Your Teen Cont.

10. Teach your tween good physical self-management: at least nine hours of sleep every night, regular protein and low glycemic snacks, regular exercise. Instilling these habits can take real creativity on the part of parents, but they greatly reduce moodiness and you'll be happy they're well-established when your child hits the teen years.

11. Don't be surprised if your preteen son or daughter develops some anxiety or dependency. It's not at all unusual for preteens to get scared by all the changes in their bodies, the peer pressures to grow up, or the fear of separating from mom and dad. This is most often expressed as separation or sleep anxiety, and if you empathize and let them cling to you a bit, will not last long.

12. Be aware of the special needs of your son or daughter as they grow into adults in a culture that perpetuates unhealthy attitudes about men, women, and sexuality.

Girls will need your help handling media images of women, cultural expectations about attractiveness, the pressure to be sexy, her relationship with food, and her body. Remember that girls naturally fill out before they shoot up, and be careful not to impose society's insistence that only thin is attractive. Notice any issues you have as her body blossoms. Be aware of the research showing that most tween girls are very anxious about the bodily changes ahead and the sense they have from the media that becoming a woman puts them in danger from men. Girls particularly need their fathers to continue offering physical hugs and open admiration for what a beautiful daughter they have, in an atmosphere of total safety and appropriate boundaries.



Boys need help integrating their sense of connection, tenderness and vulnerability -- which are a part of all human relationships -- with societal images of manliness. It's normal for boys approaching their teen years to act cool, indifferent, and invulnerable with their peers, even when they're actually highly sensitive kids. A responsible, affectionate father or uncle can be a critical teacher as a tween boy learns how to be a good man -- while fitting in with the guys. And mom needs to keep warmly talking and listening with her son about his interests and experiences, while staying aware that he needs to see himself as competent and independent in solving his own problems.

Source: <http://www.ahaparenting.com/ages-stages/tweens/tweens-preteens>

Student Corner

This section provides P.S. student's accomplishments.



Band, Chorus, and Steel Drum Concert

Steel Drum concert - Tuesday, May 13th, 7:00pm

6th Grade Band, 6th Grade Chorus and Orchestra (6-8) – Wednesday, May 14th 7:00PM

7th and 8th Grade band concert – Monday, May 19th 7:00PM

7th and 8th Grade Chorus Concert – Wednesday, May 28th 7:30PM

For more information, please contact John Bell, Chorus Teacher. (302) 762.7146 * john.bell@bsd.k12.de.us



Ambitiously Beautiful Fashion Show

Date: Friday, May 23, 2014

Time: 6:00PM

Location: P.S. duPont Middle School Auditorium

Admission

\$3 for students (students must be accompanied with an adult)

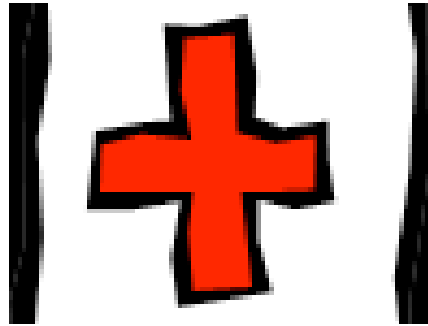
\$5 for adults

For ticket information, contact

Antonia De Luz-Roane at 302.762.7146 ext. 1158.

Need to Know News

This section provides important information about activities for P.S. families.



The Nurse's Corner

It's never too early to start thinking about next school year. Is your child wanting to try out for an after school sponsored athletic team? If so, then s/he will need a completed NEW DIAA sports physical on file with me. This form can be found as a hyperlink on our school's website. (Please note that this new form is 7 pages long). The examination should have occurred April 1, 2014 or after for it to count for next year's sports. It can be turned into the school Nurse as soon as it is completed. As another option for families: PS is hosting sports physicals after school on 9/2/14 for a cash fee of \$ 25.00. More details will follow as we get closer to that date.

If you ever have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at 762-7147 or email at robin.collins@bsd.k12.de.us.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH P.S. DUPONT!

Connect with P.S. duPont Middle School on social media to find out the latest information, programs, and highlights.

[FOLLOW US ON TWITTER](#)

@PS_DuPont

[SCAN TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK](#)



Or search for us on Facebook at P.S. DuPont Middle School

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

Send an email to info@bsd.k12.de.us to subscribe to our monthly electronic newsletter.

[RECEIVE EMERGENCY TEXT ALERTS](#)

Send a text to 4040 with this message: Follow [@BSDalerts](#) to receive emergency alerts about school closings on your mobile phone. (Standard text rates may apply.)



[VISIT](#)

www.brandywineschools.org





Year-End Family Engagement Survey

It's that time of the year to evaluate us by providing your feedback on our progress for this school year 2013-2014. As we need our families' feedback and input in order to improve for next year. WE need to hear from YOU!!

Please provide your feedback through the following link or through the QR code:

<http://www.brandywineschools.org/Page/687>

or



This information is very important to the Brandywine School District from our many families across the district. We will take your thoughts and opinions on a variety of topics related to your experiences, involvement and academic support of our students and use it during a variety of our planning sessions over the summer.

Thank you again for sharing your insights and thoughts with us. We look forward to sharing this information over the coming months.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Ashley Dalzell-Gray at 302-793-5044 or email at Ashley.Dalzellgray@bsd.k12.de.us

Important Dates to Know

May	1-2	Little Mermaid Musical	August	20	First Teacher Day	
	6	Interim Ends		25	First Day (6th Grade)	
	7-10	7th Grade NYC Trip		26	First Day (All Students)	
	7	AVID Parent Night		29	No School, Labor Day	
	8	Prescription Drug Abuse Program				
	12	School Board Meeting				
	14	6th Grade Band, Chorus & Orchestra Concert				
		Interims Distributed (6-12)				
	17	8th Grade Formal				
	19	7th & 8th Grade Band Concert				
	20	NJHS Induction and Awards Ceremony				
	21	PTA Meeting				
	22	Gifted Program Welcome Social				
	23	Anti-Bullying Fashion Show				
	26	No School, Memorial Day				
	28	7th & 8th Grade Chorus Concert				
	30	Relay for Life				
	31	Achiever's Academy 5K Run Band & Choir Hershey Park Trip				
	June	2-6		Final Exams (Half Day)		
		2		School Board Meeting		
6		Last Student Day				
10		Last Teacher Day				
11-22		8th Grade Boston Trip				
21,24		Summer School Teacher Inservice				
	30	Summer School Begins				
July	4	No School, Independence Day				

**For more important dates and information, please visit
P.S. school calendar and website at
www.brandywineschools.org/psdupont**